



*****EMBARGOED UNTIL 11 A.M. CST ON WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 6*****

SCORES PROVIDE FIRST LOOK AT IMPROVEMENT IN SCHOOLS IDENTIFIED IN ESSA PLAN

Early Childhood Performance Profiles Show Continued Progress Since Landmark Act 3 Legislation

BATON ROUGE, La. -- The Louisiana Department of Education today released performance data that detail how well schools and child care centers across the state prepared students, birth through grade 12, for the next level of learning during the 2018-2019 school year. The results are now available online in the [Louisiana School and Center Finder](#).

Public school scores announced today mark an important milestone in the implementation of the state's [Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\) plan](#), which requires states to [identify and improve struggling public schools](#). The results indicate promising initial outcomes in many long-struggling schools identified as needing improvement:

- Of 219 schools initially identified under ESSA as in need of comprehensive improvement, excluding alternative schools, 36 percent increased by 3 or more school performance score (SPS) points, 40 percent remained generally steady, and 24 percent declined by 3 or more SPS points. By comparison, 29 percent of other schools, excluding alternative schools, increased by 3 or more points.
- Struggling schools undergoing improvement efforts grew by an average of 4.8 SPS points, compared with 3.9 SPS points among other improving schools.
- Of the 219 struggling schools identified by the state, excluding alternative schools, 43 schools--20 percent--improved a full letter grade, compared with 15 percent among all other public schools, excluding those already scoring at the "A" level.

However, the results also signal the need for significantly greater improvement in struggling schools. As required by the state's ESSA plan, Louisiana has added to its list of identified schools those schools with persistently struggling groups of students. The identified [571 schools](#)--44 percent of all public schools in Louisiana--will be required to develop plans for improvement to submit to the state for approval and funding. Of those schools, 89 have received ratings of "F" for two or more consecutive years, and 25 have received "F" ratings for four or more consecutive years, making them eligible for inclusion in the state-run [Recovery School District \(RSD\)](#).

"Today's release provides early indications that school systems taking seriously their responsibility to provide a quality education for all children can make significant improvements, even in persistently struggling schools," said State Superintendent John White. "The release also underscores the urgency of taking action. More than 45,000 students still attend a school rated 'F.' This can and must change."

Today's release also equips parents and communities with information on early childhood centers across the state, which have showed continued progress in the years since the state Legislature passed the landmark [Early Childhood Education Act, known as Act 3](#). Compared to last year, 126 more sites, or 7 percent, achieved Proficient or above in 2018-2019, indicating more children are receiving quality care and education.

However, the results emphasize the need to further expand access to these high-quality programs, particularly for children birth to age three. While 86 percent of economically disadvantaged 4 year olds have access to quality early learning, only 1 percent of our infants, 6 percent of our toddlers, and 26 percent of our 3 year olds do.

2018-2019 School and Center Performance Results

The 2018-2019 K-12 school performance results show:

- **The distribution of school performance scores has shifted modestly to include more "A" and "B" grades.** The result is 16 percent of schools statewide received an "A" grade; 32 percent of schools statewide received a "B" grade; 29 percent of schools statewide received a "C" grade; 14 percent of schools statewide received a "D" grade; and 9 percent of schools statewide received an "F" grade.
- **Alternative schools are now evaluated based on a formula that is more closely aligned to their unique mission.** Prior to the new formula, 100 percent of alternative schools earned F letter grades. In 2018-2019, when the new formula took effect, 42 percent earned a "C" grade, 23 percent earned a "D" grade, and 35 percent earned an "F" grade.
- **The number of school systems achieving "A" grades increased, from four to nine, since last year, as the number of lowest-rated school systems decreased, from two to one.** Of the 70 total school systems statewide, 12 school systems improved their performance score by 3 or more points; 57 remained steady, and one dropped by 3 or more points

The 2018-2019 early childhood performance profiles show:

- **Eighty-four percent of all sites achieved ratings in that research shows promote kindergarten readiness, quality care and instruction.** The results are an improvement from the previous year, when 77 percent of sites did. Moreover, the improvement occurred at all age levels.
- **Low-performing sites that implemented improvement plans saw greater gains than did other sites that did not.** Ninety-five percent of sites participating in state-led improvement efforts saw gains, compared to 33 percent of persistently struggling sites that did not participate in improvement efforts. Forty-five percent of the participating sites achieved significant growth, increasing 1 point or more and earning them a spot on the [state's "Top Gains" honor roll](#).

Next Steps in Supporting School and Center Improvement

Based on the 2018-2019 results, 271 schools have been identified as in need of comprehensive

intervention in 2019-2020 and will submit plans for whole-school improvement. An additional 300 schools struggled persistently with one or more groups of students and/or school discipline and are required to submit a plan for urgent intervention. If approved, the schools are eligible to receive federal funding support to implement their plans.

Select school systems with struggling schools will present on their progress to the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) at its December 2019 meeting.

In addition, 66 early childhood education sites have been flagged to work with the state to develop and implement individualized plans for improvement. This work is now underway.

[Learn more about the state's accountability system for K-12 schools.](#)

[Learn more about the state's accountability system for early childhood education sites.](#)

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